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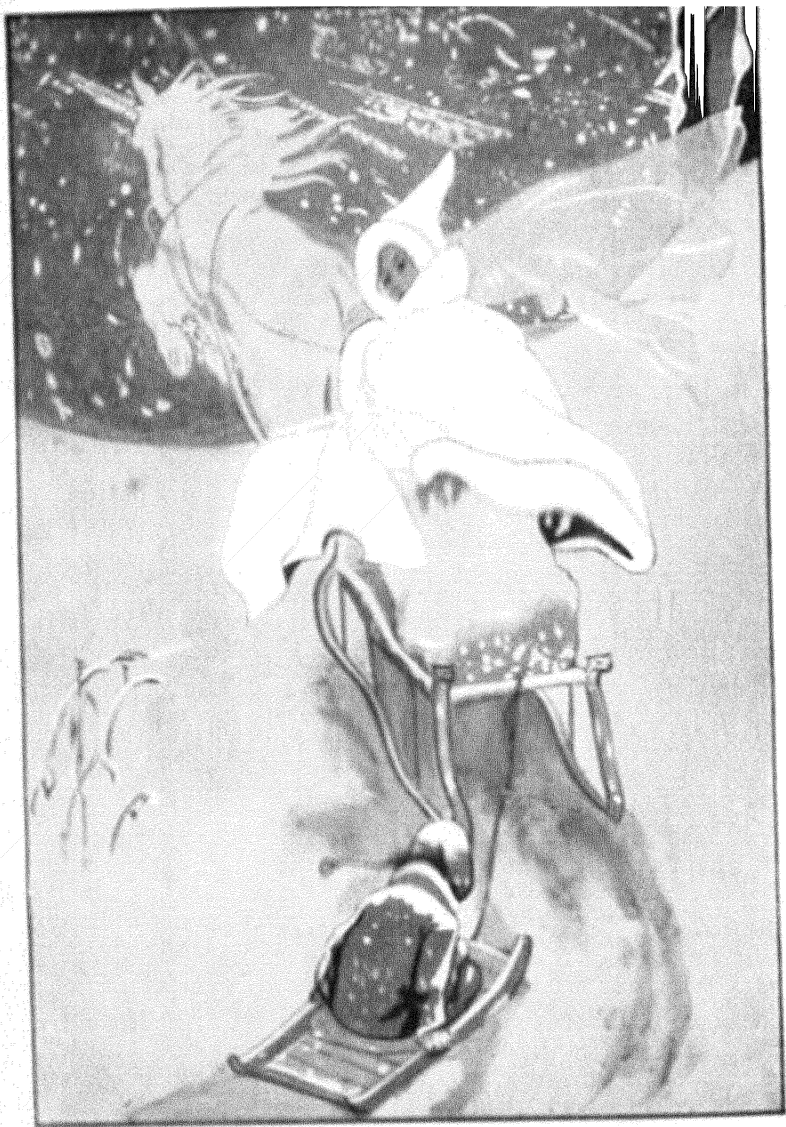
THE SNOW QUEEN CALLS FOR LITTLE KAY.

B.A.F.S. [*Frontispiece*

HANS ANDERSEN'S
FAIRY STORIES

WITH COLOUR PLATES
BY MARGARET W. TARRANT

TWELFTH EDITION

WARD, LOCK & CO., LIMITED
LONDON AND MELBOURNE

CONTENTS

COLOUR PLATES

With Miss Tarrant's sanction and help the publishers have succeeded in reproducing in this volume coloured replicas of her delightful illustrations, the originals of which were destroyed during the Air Raids on London in 1940.

PREFACE

TO Hans Christian Andersen might fitly be applied the title so happily bestowed by the natives of Samoa on Robert Louis Stevenson : Tusitala, the "Teller of Tales" For more than half a century the great Danish story-teller has been beloved by children in all parts of the world, and nowhere has he more devoted admirers than in Great Britain and those lands where English is the common tongue. As has been well said, "Andersen was a Norseman, and the blood of Norsemen is in our veins."

This series of Colour Books being chiefly designed for younger children, only those stories have been included which are most suitable for the purpose.

For those who here make first acquaintance with Andersen, it may be well to state that he was born at Odense, in the Baltic island of Funen, on April 2, 1805. His first fairy tales were published when he was about thirty years of age. "I have written them," he wrote to a friend, "just as if I were telling them to a child." That, no doubt, was the reason of his success, though as a matter of fact the stories were not at first at all highly regarded. Popularity came later, and he died, greatly honoured, at his country house near Copenhagen on August 4, 1875.

H. G.

FAIRY STORIES
FROM
HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

THE LITTLE SWINEHERD
OR THE PRINCE IN DISGUISE

THERE was once a poor Prince: he had a kingdom, but it was a very little one; still it was large enough to marry upon, d to marry he was determined.

Now, it was rather bold of him to make up to : Emperor's daughter and say to her right out, Will you have me?" Yet he did so, for his me was known far and wide, and there were ndreds of princesses who would have been very d to say "Yes," if they had been asked. But l the Emperor's daughter do so? Well now, ı shall hear.

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n the grave of the Prince's father grew a rose- —a very lovely rose-tree! It only bloomed

once in every five years, and then it only bore a single rose, but that was so sweet that by merely smelling it you forgot all your cares and sorrows. The Prince had also a nightingale which could sing as though all the lovely songs in the world were in its little throat. The Princess was to have both the rose and the nightingale, and that is how it came about that they were both put into silver cases and sent to her.

The Emperor had them borne before him into the large room where the Princess used to walk and play at "visitors" with her ladies-in-waiting; and when she saw the cases, with the presents in them, she clapped her hands for joy.

"Only fancy if it were a little pussy-cat!" said she. But it turned out to be a rose-tree with a single beautiful rose.

"How prettily it is made!" said all the Court ladies.

"It is more than pretty," said the Emperor. "It is genteel."

But the Princess felt the rose, and immediately was ready to burst into tears.

"Fie! Papa," said she; "it is not artificial after all, it is *real!*"

"Fie!" said all the Court ladies; "it is real!"

"Let us see what is in the other case before we

lose our tempers," said the Emperor, and so the nightingale was produced, and it sang so sweetly that for the moment it was quite impossible to find any fault with it.

"*Superbe! Charmant!*" cried the Court ladies, for they all chattered French; it was hard to say which of them chattered worst.

"The bird reminds me of the late Empress's musical-box!" said an old courtier. "Ah, yes! it's just the same tune, and the same time."

"Yes," said the Emperor; and began to cry like a child.

"But it is not a real bird, I hope," said the Princess.

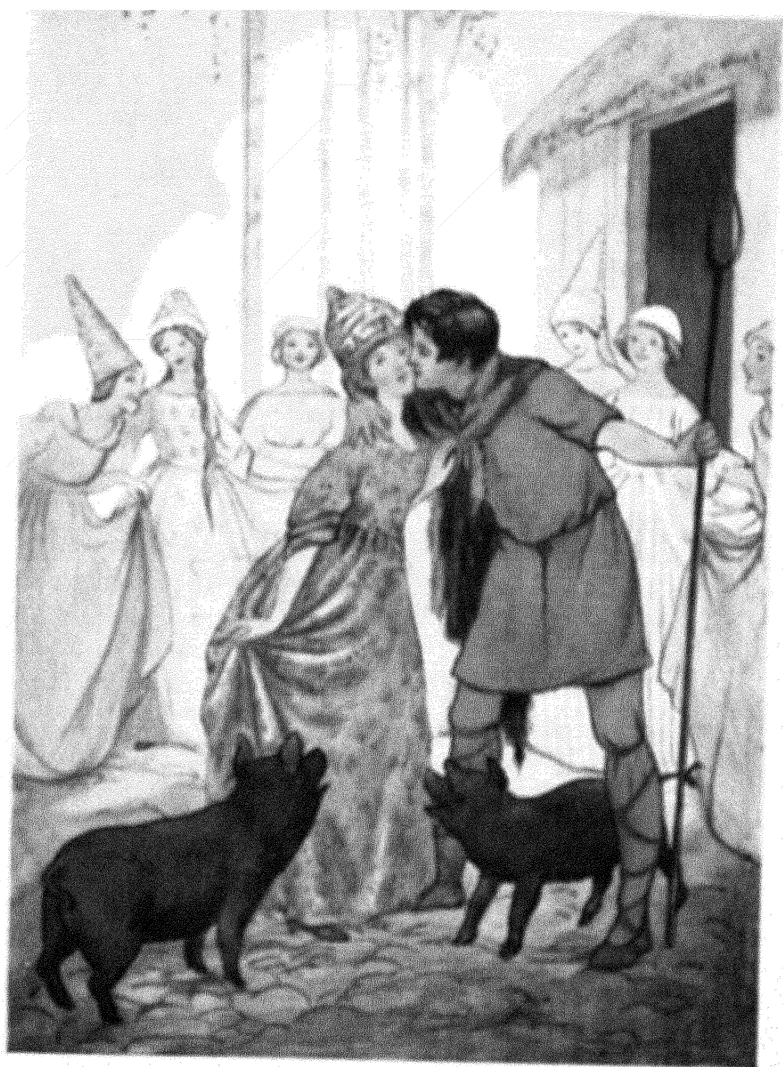
"Yes, it is a real bird," said those who had brought it.

"Indeed! then let it fly away!" said the Princess, and she would on no account hear of the Prince coming to see her.

But he was not to be rebuffed. He smeared his face all over with black and brown, pressed his cap down over his eyes, and knocked at the palace door.

"Good morning, Emperor!" said he. "Could I not take service in the palace here?"

"Well, there are so many applicants already," said the Emperor; "but let me see, I very much

So all the court ladies stood around, spreading out their dresses, and he up and kissed her.

want someone who can look after the swine, for we have lots of them."

So the Prince was appointed the Imperial swineherd. They gave him a wretched little shed close to the pigstye, and there he had to live. The whole day long he sat and worked, and by evening had made a pretty little pipkin, with bells all round it, and as soon as ever the pipkin began to boil, the bells tinkled so prettily, and played the old melody –

> "Ah! thou darling Augustine!
> 'Tis all over now, I ween!"

But the best of it was that when one held one's fingers in the steam that came out of this pot one could immediately smell what was being cooked on every hearth in the town. Now, that was certainly something very superior to a rose.

And now the Princess came walking along with her ladies-in-waiting, and when she heard the melody she stood still, and was delighted, for she also could play "Ah! thou darling Augustine!" It was indeed the only tune she knew, but she played it with one finger.

"Yes," she said, "that is the song that I can play. He must indeed be a clever swineherd. Go in and ask him what the instrument costs."

So one of the maids of honour was obliged to

go down into the shed, but she put on pattens first

"What do you want for that pipkin?" asked the maid of honour.

"I want ten kisses from the Princess," said the swineherd.

"Good gracious!" said the maid of honour.

"Yes, I will not take less," said the swineherd.

"Well, what does he say?" asked the Princess.

"I really dare not tell you," said the maid of honour, "it is too frightful!"

"Then whisper it in my ear." So she whispered.

"He is very naughty, really!" said the Princess, and turned away at once; but when she had gone a little distance the bells jingled again so sweetly:—

"Ah! thou darling Augustine!
'Tis all over now, I ween!"

"Listen now!" said the Princess, "ask him if he will take ten kisses from my Court ladies."

"No, thank you!" said the swineherd; "ten kisses from the Princess, please, or I shall keep the pipkin!"

"How very tiresome, to be sure!" said the Princess. "Well, then, stand all of you in front of me, so that nobody can see!"

So all the Court ladies made a circle round them, spreading out their dresses; and the swineherd got the ten kisses, and the Princess the pipkin.

And now indeed they had a merry time of it. All that evening, and the whole of the next day, the pipkin was kept a-boiling. There was not a hearth in the town but they knew what was being cooked there, whether it was the Lord Chamberlain's or the cobbler's. The Court ladies danced and clapped their hands.

"We know who is going to have soup and pancakes for dinner, and who is going to have chops and hasty-pudding. How interesting that is!"

"Most highly interesting!" said the Lady Stewardess of the Household

"Yes; but hold your tongues about it, for I am the Emperor's daughter!"

"Of course, of course!" said they all.

The swineherd, that is to say, the Prince—but *they* of course thought he was a real swineherd—let not a day pass without making something or other; and at last he made a rattle, and when one sprang this rattle, one heard all the waltzes, jigs, and polkas that ever were known since the creation of the world.

"Why, that is *superbe!*" said the Princess, as she passed by, "I have never heard a finer composition! Listen now! Just go and ask him what the instrument costs. But mind, I will give no more kisses!"

"He wants a hundred kisses from the Princess!" said the maid of honour who had been to ask.

"I think he is mad!" said the Princess, and she went on her way, but when she had gone a little distance she stood still. "After all, one should encourage the fine arts," said she. "I am the Emperor's daughter. Tell him he shall have ten kisses as before; he can take the rest from my Court ladies."

"But we do not care about that!" said the Court ladies.

"Fiddlesticks!" said the Princess. "If I can kiss him surely you may. Remember, I give you board and wages!" So the maid of honour had to go to him again.

"A hundred kisses from the Princess," said he, "or everyone keeps his own!"

"Stand around us then!" said the Princess, and so all the Court ladies did as they were bid, and he up and kissed her.

"What is the meaning of all that commotion

by the pigstye yonder ? " asked the Emperor, who had stepped out upon the balcony ; and he rubbed his eyes, and put on his spectacles. " Why, if it isn't the Court ladies ! They are playing some sort of game. I must go down to them." So he put on his slippers, and pulled them up behind, for they were shoes he had worn down at heel.

My goodness ! what a hurry he was in.

As soon as he came into the courtyard, he walked very softly, and the Court ladies had so much to do with counting the kisses, so that it might be a perfectly fair bargain, and the swineherd might not get too many or too few, that they never observed the Emperor.

He raised himself on tiptoe. " Why, what's this ? " said he, when he saw them kissing, and with that he beat them about the head with his slipper just as the swineherd had got his six-and-eightieth kiss.

" Be off with you, out of my sight ! " said the Emperor, for he was very wrath, and both the Princess and the swineherd were expelled from his domains.

There she stood now a-weeping ; the swineherd cursed and the rain poured down in torrents.

" Alas ! wretched creature that I am ! " said

the Princess; "if only I had taken that nice Prince! Alas! how miserable I am!"

Then the swineherd slipped behind a tree, wiped all the black and brown from his face, threw away his nasty clothes, and stepped forward in his princely raiment, looking so handsome that the Princess could not but curtsey.

"I have come to scorn you," said he. "You would not have an honest Prince! You could not appreciate roses and nightingales, but you could kiss the swineherd for a trumpery toy! Take it, then, and much good may it do you!"

So he returned to his kingdom, shut the door behind him, and barred and bolted it, and she was left outside to sing:—

"Ah! thou darling Augustine!
'Tis all over now, I ween!"

THE NIGHTINGALE

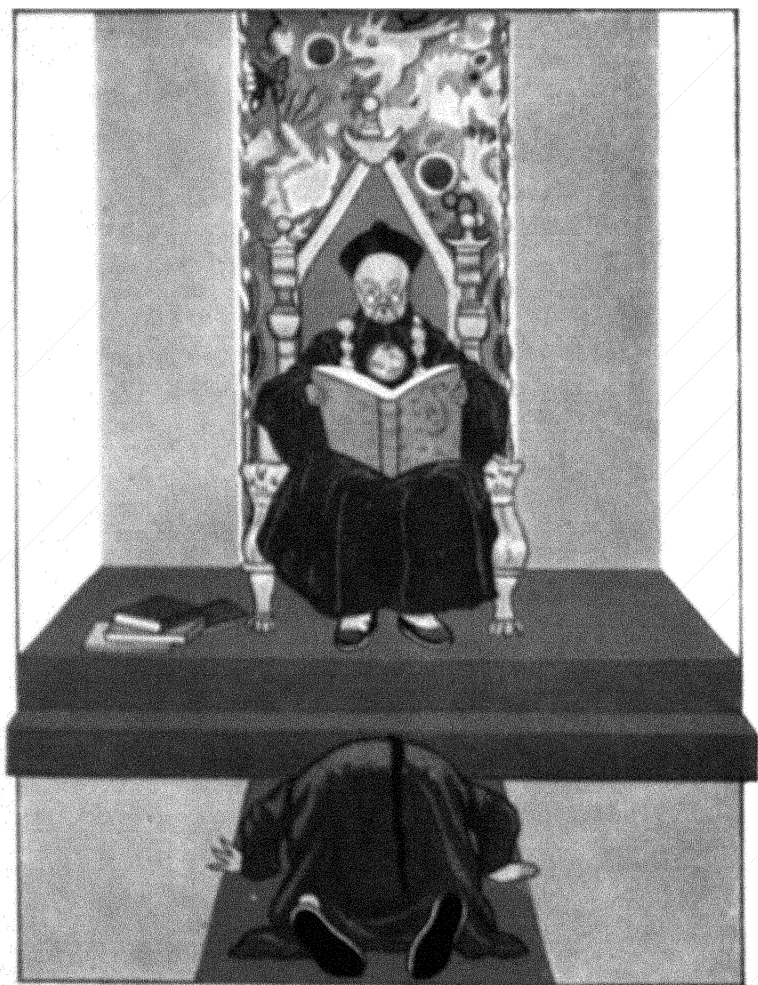
IN China you know very well, of course, the Emperor is a Chinaman and all those about him are Chinese also. It happened many years ago, but just for that very reason the story is worth hearing before it is forgotten. The Emperor's palace was the most gorgeous in the world; it was built entirely of the finest porcelain and was very costly, but so brittle that one had always to take particular care not to touch it. In the garden were the most wonderful flowers, and to the most beautiful of them were tied silver bells which rang whenever anybody passed by lest they should miss seeing the flowers. Yes, everything in the Emperor's garden was extremely beautiful, and the garden itself stretched so far that the gardener himself did not know where it ended.

If one walked far in it, one came to the loveliest wood, with lofty trees and deep lakes. The wood ran down to the sea, which was deep and blue; large ships could sail under the branches and in one of these branches dwelt a nightingale which sang so sweetly that even the poor fisherman, who

had many other things to attend to, would stop to listen when he went out at night to drag up his nets. "How beautiful it is!" he said, but then he had to see to other things and so forgot the bird. Yet, next night, when it sang again, and the fisherman came thither, he was sure to say the same thing: "How beautiful it is!"

Travellers came from all parts of the world to see and admire the Emperor's city and the palace and the garden. But when they heard the nightingale they said, "Yes, that is better than all!"

And the travellers when they got home related what they had seen, and the learned wrote many books about the city and the palace and the garden. But they did not forget the nightingale; indeed, they put that first, and those who could write poetry penned the loveliest verses about the nightingale in the wood by the deep blue lake.

These books went the round of the world and some of them in course of time reached the Emperor. He sat on his gold throne and read and read. Every moment he nodded his head, for it pleased him to read the fine descriptions of the city and the palace and the garden. "But when all is said, the nightingale is still the best of all!" said the books.

"Why, what is this?" said the Emperor. "The nightingale! I do not know of any nightingale! Must one learn such things from books? This must be looked into."

So he called his lord-in-waiting.

"Why, what is this?" said the Emperor—"the nightingale! I do not know of any nightingale! I had no idea there was such a bird in my kingdom, let alone in my very garden! Must one learn such things from books? This must be looked into."

So he called his lord-in-waiting, who was so very grand that whenever any one lower in rank than himself presumed to speak to him or to ask a question he only answered, "P!" which meant nothing at all.

"There is said to be a very remarkable bird called a Nightingale!" the Emperor informed him; "people declare that it is the finest thing in my vast realm. Why have I not been told about it?"

"I have never heard it so much as mentioned before," replied the lord-in-waiting; "it has never been presented at Court!"

"I command it to come here this very evening and sing to me," said the Emperor. "Why, the whole world knows what I possess and yet *I* don't know it!"

"I never heard the name of it before!" said the lord-in-waiting, "but I will have inquiries made and find it!"

But where was it to be found? The lord-in-

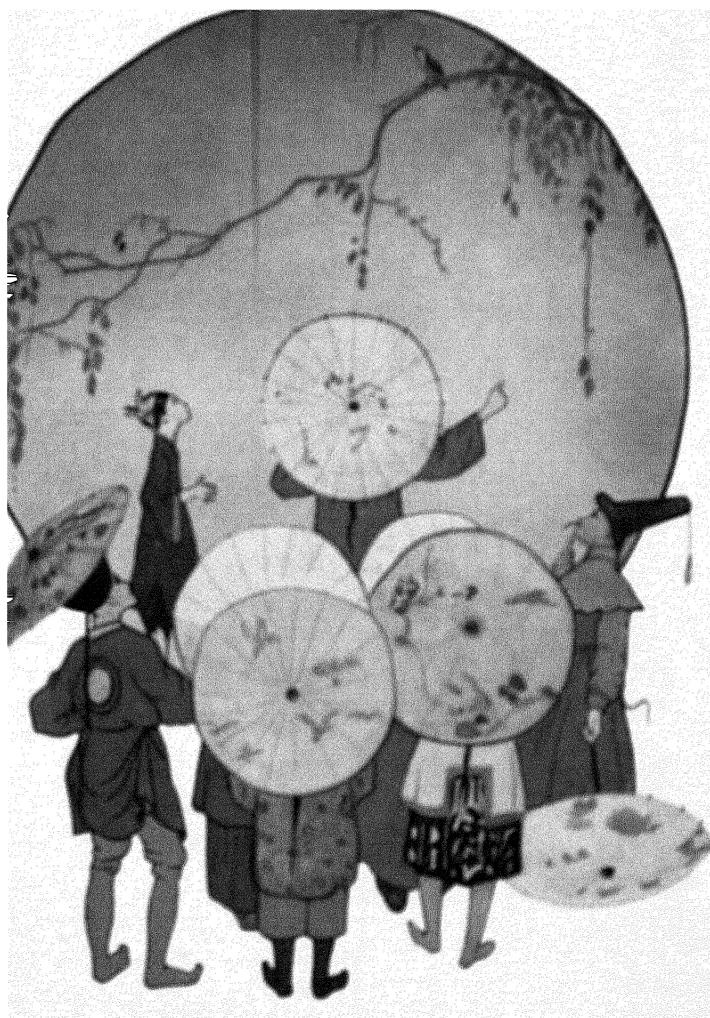
waiting ran up and down all the staircases in the palace and through all the rooms and corridors, but of the people he met not one knew about the nightingale. So the lord-in-waiting came back to the Emperor and said the whole thing must be a fable invented by those who wrote books "Your Imperial Majesty must not believe what you find written there. It is all invention and something else which they call the Black Art!"

"But the book in which I read this was sent to me by the high and mighty Emperor of Japan," said the Emperor, "and therefore it cannot be an untruth. I wish to hear the nightingale! It must be here this evening! I accord it my most gracious favour! And if it does not come the whole Court shall be trampled on directly it has eaten its supper!"

"Tsing-pe!" said the lord-in-waiting, and again he ran up and down all the stairs, through all the rooms and corridors, and half the Court ran with him, for they did not like the idea of being trampled on. There was a universal inquiry about the wonderful nightingale which was known to all the rest of the world but to nobody at Court.

At last they found a poor little girl in the kitchen and she said, "What! the nightingale!

"Little nightingale," cried the scullery-maid loudly, "our gracious Emperor wants you to sing to him so much!"

"With the greatest pleasure!" said the nightingale, and sang so that it was a delight to listen.

Why, I know it quite well! Sing? I should think so! Every evening I take the dinner-leavings to my poor sick mother who lives by the sea-shore, and when I am coming back and am tired and rest in the wood I hear the nightingale sing, and then the tears come into my eyes and it is just as if my mother were kissing me!"

"Little scullery-maid!" said the lord-in-waiting, "I will get you a permanent situation in the kitchen, with permission to see the Emperor eat, if you will lead us to the nightingale, for it is to have an audience this evening."

So they went together to the wood where the nightingale was wont to sing. Half the Court was there. As they picked their way along a cow began to low.

"Oh!" said the lord-in-waiting, "now we have it! That is really a remarkable power for so small an animal! Of course, we have heard it before. We remember it distinctly!"

"No! that is the lowing of the cows!" said the little scullery-maid; "we are still a long way from the place!"

And now the frogs croaked in the marshes.

"Pretty!" said the Chinese court chaplain, "now I hear it; 'tis just like tiny temple bells."

"Nay, those are the frogs!" said the little

scullery-maid, "but I think we shall hear it very soon."

Then the nightingale began to sing.

"That's it!" said the little girl. "Listen! listen! And look! there it sits"; and she pointed to a little grey bird in the branches.

"Is it possible!" said the lord-in-waiting. "I never imagined it was like that! How very simple it looks! It is a little off colour, no doubt, at being visited by so many distinguished persons!"

"Little nightingale!" cried the scullery-maid loudly, "our gracious Emperor wants you to sing to him so much!"

"With the greatest pleasure!" said the nightingale, and sang so that it was a delight to listen.

"It is like crystal bells!" said the lord-in-waiting, "and just look how the little throat moves up and down. It is really remarkable. We have never heard it before. It will have a great success at Court!"

"Shall I sing to the Emperor once more?" asked the nightingale, for it thought the Emperor was one of the party.

"My excellent little nightingale!" said the lord-in-waiting, "it is my privilege to invite you to a great entertainment at Court this evening,

where you will enchant his high Imperial Majesty with your charming voice!"

"It sounds best in the green woods," said the nightingale, but it willingly went with them when it heard that the Emperor wished it.

There were grand doings at the palace. The porcelain walls and floor shone with thousands of gold lamps, the loveliest flowers were set up in the corridors, and there was such a running about and such a draught that all the bells rang so much that you could not hear the sound of your own voice.

In the middle of the large room where the Emperor sat, a golden perch had been placed for the nightingale to sit upon The whole Court was there and the little scullery-maid had leave to stand behind the door, for she was no longer merely a temporary but a real scullery-maid. Everybody wore their most gorgeous finery and all turned their eyes to the little grey bird when the Emperor nodded to it.

Then the nightingale sang so beautifully that tears came into the Emperor's eyes and trickled right down his cheeks. Presently it sang more beautifully than ever, so that the notes seemed to go to the very heart; and the Emperor was so delighted that he said the nightingale should

have his gold slipper to wear round its neck. But the nightingale declined with thanks; it had been rewarded enough already, it said.

"I have seen tears in the eyes of the Emperor, and that is the most precious treasure to me. An Emperor's tears have a wonderful power. God knows I have been rewarded enough;" and it sang again with its sweet, heavenly voice.

"That is the most captivating coquetry we know of," said all the ladies who were present, and they put water in their mouths so as to be able to cluck and gurgle when anyone spoke to them. They fancied they, too, were nightingales then; nay, the footmen and waiting-maids themselves said that they were satisfied, and that is a great deal, for they are always the most difficult to please. Yes, the nightingale's success was complete.

It was now to remain at Court, and to have its own cage and the privilege of walking out twice in the daytime and once at night. It was attended by twelve servants, each of whom tied a silk ribbon round its leg and held on fast. There was not very much enjoyment in such a walk as that!

The whole town talked about the remarkable bird and whenever two persons met, one of them

immediately said to the other, "Night!" and the other said "gale!" and then they sighed and understood each other; nay, eleven chandlers' children were called after it, but not one of them had a single musical note in his whole composition.

One day a large packet arrived for the Emperor and on the outside of it was written, "The Nightingale!"

"Here now we have a new book about our famous bird!" said the Emperor; but it was not really a book but a little work of art, which lay in a box, an artificial nightingale which had been made to resemble the living one, but was covered all over with diamonds, rubies and sapphires. As soon as you wound up this artificial bird it could sing one of the pieces the real nightingale sang, and then its neck moved up and down and all the gold and silver on it sparkled. Round its neck was a little ribbon and on this was written: "The Emperor of Japan's nightingale is poor compared with that of the Emperor of China!"

"That is very pretty!" said they all, and he, who had brought the artificial bird immediately received the title of Chief-Imperial-Nightingale-Bringer.

"Now the two must sing together," said the courtiers. "What a duet it will be!"

But it would not do at all, for the real nightingale sang in his own way and the artificial bird went by clockwork. "I have no fault to find with it," said the music master; "it's time is perfect and quite of my school!" So the artificial bird had to sing alone. It was just as successful as the real one and much prettier to look at besides; it glistened like bracelets and breast-pins.

Three and thirty times it sang one and the same piece and yet wasn't tired. The people would have liked to hear it all over again, but the Emperor thought that the living bird ought now to sing a little but how was this? Nobody had noticed that it had flown out of the open window back to its green woods.

"Did you ever hear of such a thing!" said the Emperor, and all the courtiers stormed and declared that the nightingale was a most ungrateful creature.

"At any rate we have still the best bird," they said, and so the artificial bird had to sing again, and that made the four and thirtieth time they had heard the same piece. But even now they did not know all of it, it was so very difficult. The music master praised the bird above measure, maintaining that it was better than the real

nightingale, not only with regard to its clothes and the many beautiful diamonds but also as to its own merit.

"For look now! your Imperial Majesty, and you also, ladies and gentlemen, as regards the real nightingale you can never tell for certain what will come, but as regards the artificial bird everything is fixed and definite. Thus 'twill be and not otherwise. You can explain all about it. You can open it and display the ingenuity of man. You can see the position of the various parts, how they work and how they follow one after the other!"

"Those are exactly my own thoughts!" said all present, and the music master got leave to show the bird to the people on the following Sunday.

"They also shall hear it sing," said the Emperor.

And hear it they did and were as pleased as if they had been to a tea party and drunk lots of tea, for that is the proper thing to do in China. They all said, "Oh!" and held up their forefingers and nodded; but the poor fisherman who had heard the real nightingale said, "It sounds nice enough, but there is something wanting. I know not what!"

The real nightingale was banished from the realm.

The artificial bird was placed on a silk cushion close by the Emperor's bed; all the gifts it had received, both of gold and precious stones, lay round about it, and, as to titles, why, it had risen to be "High-Imperial-Night-Singer" and in rank was No. 1 on the left side, for the Emperor reckoned that side to be the nobler on which the heart lay, and even in an Emperor the heart lies on the left side. And the music master wrote five and twenty volumes about the artificial bird; his treatise was long and learned and full of the hardest Chinese words, and all the people said they had read and understood it, for otherwise they would have been considered stupid and been trampled upon.

A whole year passed. The Emperor, the Court and all the other Chinese knew by heart every little cluck in the artificial bird's song, but just for that reason they liked it all the better; they could sing it, too, and they did so. The street-boys sang, "*Zee-zee-zee!* kluk-kluk-kluk!" and the Emperor sang it. Yes, indeed, it was really charming!

But one evening, while the artificial bird was singing its best and the Emperor was lying in bed

listening to it, something inside the bird said "sooop" and something went "muurrrr!" All the wheels ran round and the music stopped.

The Emperor at once sprang out of bed and sent for his physician, but what could *he* do! Then he had the watchmaker fetched and after a good deal of talking and peeping, he put the bird somewhat to rights, but he said they must spare it as much as possible, for the machinery was so worn that it was not possible to supply new works which could be relied upon to go with the music. It was a great grief! Only once a year could the artificial bird be allowed to sing and they were very strict about it even then; but the music master made a little speech full of hard words and said that it was just as good as before, and so it *was* just as good as before.

Five years had now passed and the whole land was bowed down by a great sorrow, for, at heart, they were all devoted to their Emperor, and now he was sick and could not live, it was said. A new Emperor had already been chosen and the people stood in the street and asked the lord-in-waiting how their Emperor was.

"P!" said he and shook his head.

Cold and pale lay the Emperor in his large and gorgeous bed. The whole Court thought he was

dead and every one ran to greet the new Emperor; the valets ran away to talk about it, and the palace serving-maids had company to a large coffee party. Cloth coverings were strewn about the rooms and corridors so that people might walk softly and therefore it was still, oh, so still. But the Emperor was not dead yet; stiff and pale he lay in his gorgeous bed with the long velvet curtains and the heavy gold tassels. High above a window stood open and the moon shone in upon the Emperor and the artificial bird.

The poor Emperor could scarcely breathe; it was as if someone were sitting on his chest. He opened his eyes and saw that it was Death who sat upon his breast and had taken up his gold crown and held in one hand the Emperor's golden sabre and in the other his splendid banner. And round about the folds of the large velvet bed-curtains strange-looking heads peeped forth, some quite ugly and others sweet and gentle; they were the Emperor's good and evil deeds gazing at him now that Death was at his heart.

"Music, music!" cried the Emperor, "the big Chinese drum, that I may not hear what they say!"

But the figures remained and Death nodded, just like a Chinaman.

"Music, music!" shrieked the Emperor, "you charming little gold bird, sing, sing, pray do! I have given you gold and precious things; I myself have hung my gold slipper round your neck. Sing, I say, sing!"

But the bird remained silent; there was none to wind it up and it never sang otherwise. And Death kept on looking at the Emperor, and all was so still, so frightfully still.

At that very instant the most beautiful song sounded close by the window. It came from the little living nightingale which sat upon the branch outside. It had heard of the Emperor's sore need and had therefore come to sing hope and comfort to his soul, and as it sang the shapes round the bed grew paler and paler, the blood passed more quickly through the Emperor's weak limbs and Death himself listened and said, "Go on, little nightingale, go on!"

"Yes; but will you give me the splendid gold sabre? Will you give me the rich banner? Will you give me the Emperor's crown?"

And Death gave away all these treasures for a song and the nightingale kept on singing. It sang of the silent churchyard where the white roses grow, where the elderberry tree scents the air and where the fresh grass is wet with

mourners' tears. Then Death felt a longing for his garden and swept out of the window like a cold white mist.

"Thanks, thanks!" said the Emperor, "you heavenly little bird! I know you well. 'Twas you I drove out of my realm and yet you have sung the evil visions away from my bedside! How can I reward you?"

"You *have* rewarded me," said the nightingale. "I drew tears from your eyes the first time I sang, that I shall never forget; those are jewels which rejoice a singer's heart. But go to sleep now and get well and strong! I will sing to you!"

As it sang the Emperor fell into a sweet sleep, such a soft, refreshing sleep.

The sun was shining in upon him through all the windows when he awoke, strong and hale. Not one of his servants had yet come back, for they fancied he was dead, but the nightingale still sat and sang.

"You must stay with me always!" said the Emperor; "you shall only sing when you like and I will break the artificial bird into a thousand pieces."

"Don't do that!" said the nightingale, "after all, it did what it could. Keep it as before. For myself, I cannot fix my abode in the palace, but

let me come when I have a mind to and then I will sit on this branch near the window in the evening and sing to you and so make you thoughtful and happy at the same time. I will sing of those who rejoice and of those who suffer. I will sing of the good and the evil which go on around you and yet are hid from you. The little song-bird flies far and wide. He flies to the poor fisherman, to the roof of the husbandman, to every one who is far from you and your Court. I love your heart more than your crown, and yet the crown also has an odour of sanctity about it. I'll come, I'll sing to you—but one thing you *must* promise me!"

"I'll promise you everything," said the Emperor, and there he stood in his imperial robes, which he had put on himself, and he held his sabre, which was heavy with gold, to his heart.

"One thing I beg of you! Tell no one that you have a little bird which tells you everything and things will be better for you."

And away the nightingale flew.

The servants came in to see their dead Emperor. Yes, there they all stood, and how amazed they were when the Emperor said, "Good morning!"

THE STEADFAST TIN SOLDIER

THERE were once five-and-twenty tin soldiers, who were all brothers, for they were made out of the same old tin ladle. They shouldered their muskets, looked straight before them, and wore a smart red and blue uniform.

The first thing they heard in this world when the lid was taken off the box in which they lay were the words, "Tin soldiers!" A little boy said that and clapped his hands; they had been given to him because it was his birthday, and he now set them out on the table. Each soldier was the exact image of all the others—at least only one of them was a little different. He had only one leg, for he had been moulded last of all, and there was not tin enough left to give him two legs. Yet he stood as firmly on his one leg as the others did on two legs, and it was just this particular soldier who was to become remarkable.

On the table where they were set out stood a lot of other toys, but what struck the eye most was a pretty paper palace. You could see right into the rooms through the little windows. Outside stood small trees round about a little

mirror which was meant to represent a lake, and wax swans swam on the surface, which reflected back their image. It was all very pretty, but prettiest of all was certainly a little maid who stood at the open palace door; she also was cut out of paper, but she had a skirt of the brightest linen, and a narrow blue ribbon over her shoulders like a scarf, and in the middle of this was a glistening spangle as large as her whole face. The little maid stretched out both her arms, for she was a dancer, and then she lifted one of her legs so high in the air that the tin soldier could not make out what had become of it, and fancied that she had only one leg, like himself.

"That's the wife for me!" thought he; "but she's a great swell; she lives in a palace, while I have only a box, and there are five-and-twenty of us there, so it is not the place for her! Still I'll try to make her acquaintance!" So he laid himself at full length behind a snuff-box that happened to be on the table; thence he could peep at the nice little lady who kept on standing on one leg without losing her balance.

When it was evening all the other tin soldiers were put back in their box, and the people of the house went to bed. And now the toys began to

play among themselves; they played at visitors, and at warfare, and they had a ball. The tin soldiers rattled in the box, for they wanted to join in the fun, but they could not lift the lid off. The nut-crackers turned somersaults, and the pencil cast up accounts on the slate. There was such a racket that the canary awoke and began to pipe, and in verse too! The only two who did not move from their places were the tin soldier and the little dancing girl. She remained erect on the tips of her toes, with both arms stretched wide out; he was just as steadfast on his one leg, and never took his eyes off her for an instant.

And now the clock struck twelve, and crack! up flew the lid of the snuff-box; there was no snuff in it, only a little black gnome, for the box was a puzzle.

"Tin soldier," cried the gnome, "will you keep your eyes to yourself?"

But the tin soldier pretended not to hear.

"Wait till the morning, that's all!" said the gnome.

Now when it was morning and the children came up to the nursery the tin soldier was placed close to the window, and whether it was the gnome or a draught of air I don't know, but the window all at once flew open, and the soldier

fell out, head over heels, from the third storey into the street below. It was a frightful flight. His one leg was right up into the air, and he stood on his helmet with his bayonet sticking in between the flagstones.

The maid-servant and the little boy immediately came downstairs to look for him, but though they very nearly trod upon him they did not see him. If the tin soldier had cried out: "Here am I!" they certainly would have found him, but he did not consider it right and proper to ask for help, because he was in uniform.

And now it began to rain; the drops fell thicker and thicker until it poured. When the shower was over two street-boys came that way.

"Look!" cried one, "there's a tin soldier; let's give him a sail!"

So they made a boat out of a newspaper, put the tin soldier in the middle, and down the gutter he went sailing, while both boys ran along by the side, clapping their hands.

What billows there were in that gutter! And the current too! it was dreadful! Yes, the rain had poured in torrents, and no mistake! The paper boat rocked up and down and spun round and round till the tin soldier was quite dizzy; but he remained steadfast all through, never

changed countenance, looked straight before him, and shouldered arms.

All at once the boat went right under a long gutter-coping; it grew as dark as in his box.

"Where on earth am I going now!" thought he; "yes, it is all the gnome's fault. Ah! if only the little dancing maid were sitting here in the boat it might be as dark again if it liked and I should not care!"

The same instant up came a large water rat who lived under the gutter-coping.

"Have you a pass?" asked the rat. "Come! out with your pass!"

But the tin soldier kept silence and shouldered arms still more firmly.

Off went the boat, with the rat close behind it. Ugh! how it gnashed its teeth, crying, "Stop him! stop him! He hasn't paid the toll, and he hasn't shown his pass!"

But the stream grew stronger and stronger. The tin soldier could already see the bright day-light in front where the coping ended, but he heard at the same time a roaring sound which might well have made even the bravest man afraid. Only fancy! where the coping ended the gutter plunged right down into a large channel, which would be as dangerous to the tin soldier

as sailing down a large waterfall would be to us. He was already so close to the precipice that he could not stand. The boat dashed on, the poor tin soldier stood as stiff as he could, that nobody should say of him that he so much as blinked his eyes. The boat whirled round four times, and filled with water to the very brim. Sink it must! The tin soldier stood up to his neck in water, and deeper and deeper sank the boat; the paper became quite undone; now the water closed right over the soldier's head. Then he thought of the pretty little dancing girl whom he should never see again, and these lines rang in his ear:

"On, soldier! on, on, though swords clash and shots rattle,
'Tis thy fate to find death in the midst of the battle."

And now the paper burst in the middle, the soldier fell through, and the same instant was swallowed by a huge fish.

How dark it was inside there! Worse even than the gutter-coping; and the space was so narrow too. But the tin soldier remained steadfast, and lay at full length shouldering arms.

The fish frisked about, leaping and darting in the most frightful manner. At last, however, it became still, and what looked like a flash of lightning seemed to dart through it. The light

"Have you a pass?" asked the rat. "Come! out with your pass!"

But the tin soldier kept silence and shouldered arms still more firmly.

shone quite brightly, and some one cried aloud: "Tin soldier!"

The fish had been caught, carried to market, sold, and taken to the kitchen, where the maid-servant had cut it open with a large knife. She took the soldier round the waist between her finger and thumb and carried him to the parlour, whither every one hastened to look at the remarkable man who had travelled about inside a fish. Yet the tin soldier was not a bit proud. They placed him on the table, and there—how strangely, to be sure, things come about in this world!—the tin soldier found himself in the self-same room he had been in before; he saw the self-same children, and the same playthings stood upon the table; the beautiful palace with the pretty little dancing girl was there too, and she still stood on one leg and held the other in the air; she, too, was steadfast. The tin soldier was quite touched; he could have shed tin tears, but this would not have become him. He looked at her and she looked at him, but neither said a word.

Then one of the little boys took up the tin soldier and threw him right into the stove. He gave no reason whatever for doing so; no doubt the gnome in the snuff-box was at the bottom of it.

The tin soldier stood lighted up by the flames and felt a frightful heat, but whether it was the actual heat of the fire or the heat of his love he did not know. His bright colours had all faded, but whether in consequence of his journey or of his heartache nobody could say. He looked at the little maid and she looked at him, and he felt in quite a melting mood, but still he stood steadfast and shouldered arms.

Then a door opened, the draught caught the dancing girl, and she fluttered like a sylph right into the stove to the tin soldier, flashed into a flame, and was gone. The tin soldier at the same time melted into a mere lump of metal, and when the serving-maid next day raked the ashes out of the grate she found him in the shape of a little tin heart. Of the dancing girl, all that remained was the spangle, and that was as black as a cinder.

THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

MANY years ago there lived an Emperor who was so fond of new clothes that he spent all his money upon dress and finery. He cared not a straw for his soldiers, nor for going to the theatre or driving in the park; all he really cared about was showing his new clothes. He had a coat for every hour of the day, and just as in other countries men speak of the "King in Council," so here men spoke of the "Emperor in Wardrobe."

The great city where he dwelt was a very pleasant place. Many strangers visited it every day, and one day two impostors arrived who gave themselves out for weavers, and pretended they knew how to weave the most beautiful cloth imaginable. Not only were the colours and patterns altogether out of the common, but the clothes made from such cloth had the peculiar property of being invisible to every man who was either unfit for his office or stupid.

"They would indeed be valuable clothes," thought the Emperor. "By wearing them, I

could find out which of my ministers are unfit for the posts they occupy, and I could tell the wise from the stupid. Yes; some of that cloth must be woven for me at once." And he gave the two impostors a lot of money in advance so that they might begin their work.

Accordingly they set up two looms and pretended they were working, but there was absolutely nothing upon the looms. Very soon they demanded the finest silk and the purest gold thread, which they put carefully away, and worked on with the empty looms till late into the night.

"I should like to know how the manufacture of the cloth is getting on," thought the Emperor; but really and truly his heart a little misgave him when he remembered that the stupid or the incapable would not be able to see the cloth. He fancied, indeed, that he had no need to be anxious on his own account, but he thought it would be safer to send some one else first to see how things went. Every person throughout the city had heard of the wonderful properties of the new cloth, and all were eager to see how foolish or stupid their neighbours were.

"I will send my worthy old minister to the weavers," thought the Emperor; "he can best see what the cloth looks like, for he is a man of

intellect, and none is fitter for his office than he."

So the able old minister went into the room where the two impostors sat working at the empty looms. "Mercy on us!" thought he, and opened his eyes very wide. "I can't see anything." But he took very good care not to say so.

The two impostors begged him to draw nearer, and asked him if the pattern was not a pretty one, and the colours very beautiful. Then they pointed at the empty looms, and the poor old minister opened his eyes wider and wider, but he could see nothing, for there was nothing to see. "Good gracious!" thought he, "I am not stupid, surely? I never thought so before, and I'll take good care that nobody shall know it now. What! I am not fit for my office, eh? Oh, no, it will never do for me to go and say that I can't see the cloth!"

"Well, have you nothing to say about it?" asked one of the weavers.

"Oh, it is beautiful! absolutely the most lovely thing in the world!" said the old minister, and he took out his spectacles. "What a pattern! And those colours, too! Yes, I'll tell the Emperor that it pleases me immensely!"

"Well, we are pleased with it too," said the two weavers; and now they named the colours

in detail, and described the pattern. The old minister carefully listened to all they said, so as to be able to repeat the same things to the Emperor, which he accordingly did.

And now the impostors demanded more money, more silk, and more gold; they required the gold for the weaving, they said. They stuck everything into their own pockets; not so much as a thread passed over the looms; but they continued as before to weave upon the empty looms.

In a short time the Emperor sent another very able official to see how the weaving was getting on, and if the cloth was nearly ready. It fared with him as with the minister. He gazed and gazed, but as there was nothing there but the empty loom, he could not contrive to see anything.

"A pretty piece of cloth, isn't it?" said the two impostors, and pretended to point out the pretty patterns, of which there was really no trace.

"Surely I am not stupid!" thought the man. "Not fit for my post, eh! A pretty joke, I must say, but I must not let it be noticed!" So he praised the cloth he did not see, and congratulated them on the beautiful colours and the lovely patterns. "Yes, it is perfectly enchanting!" said he to the Emperor.

Soon all the people in the town were talking of the splendid cloth.

And now the Emperor had a mind to see the cloth himself while it was still on the loom. With a host of the great folk of his realm, among whom were the two able officials who had been there before, he went to the two crafty impostors, who were now working with all their might, but without a stitch or thread.

"Now, is it not magnificent?" said the two officials. "Will your Majesty deign to observe what patterns, what colours are here?" and they pointed at the empty looms, taking it for granted that the others could see the cloth.

"Why, what is this?" thought the Emperor. "I don't see anything! How horrible! Am I stupid then? Am I unfit to be Emperor? That would be the most frightful thing that could happen to me! Oh, it is very fine!" said he aloud. "It has my most gracious approbation!" and he nodded his head approvingly, and gazed at the empty loom. He would not say that he could not see anything. His whole suite stared and stared; they could make no more of it than the rest, but they repeated after the Emperor, "Oh, it is very fine!" and advised him to wear clothes made of this new and gorgeous cloth for

the first time on the occasion of the grand procession which was about to take place.

"It is magnificent, elegant, excellent!" went from mouth to mouth. Everybody seemed so mightily pleased with the cloth that the Emperor gave each of the impostors a ribbon and a cross to wear, and conferred on them the title of "Weavers to the Imperial Court."

On the eve of the procession the impostors sat up all night, and had more than sixteen candles lit. The people could see that they were busy getting ready the Emperor's new clothes. They pretended to take the cloth from the loom, they clipped the air with large scissors, and sewed with needles without thread, and at last declared, "There, the clothes are now quite ready!"

The Emperor, with his principal lords, then came himself, and the impostors raised their arms as if they were holding up something, and said, "Look, here are the hose, and here is the coat, and here the mantle. They are as light as gossamer," they continued, "you would fancy you had nothing on at all, but that is just the beauty of the cloth."

"Of course!" said all the gentlemen-in-waiting; but they could see nothing, for there was nothing to see.

"Oh, it is very fine," said the Emperor. "It has my most gracious approbation!"

And he nodded his head approvingly and gazed at the empty loom.

"And now, if your Imperial Majesty would most graciously deign to have your clothes taken off," said the impostors, "we will put on the new ones for your Majesty. In front of the large mirror, please! Thank you!"

So the Emperor's clothes were removed, and the impostors pretended to give him the newly-made ones piece by piece, and they smoothed down his body, and tied something fast which was supposed to be the train, and the Emperor turned and twisted himself in front of the mirror.

"What a capital suit it is! How nicely it fits!" the people cried with one voice. "What a pattern! What colours! It is a splendid dress!"

"The canopy which is to be borne over your Majesty in the procession is waiting outside," the Master of the Ceremonies announced.

"All right," said the Emperor; "I am quite ready. Do my clothes fit well?" He turned himself once more before the mirror, to make believe that he was now taking a general survey of his splendour. The gentlemen-in-waiting, who had to bear his train, fumbled with their hands along the floor as if they were taking the train up, and as they went along they held their hands in the air, for they dared not let it be supposed that they saw nothing.

And thus the Emperor marched in the procession beneath the beautiful canopy, and every one in the streets and in the windows said, "Gracious! how perfect the Emperor's new clothes are! What a beautiful train! How splendidly everything fits!" No one would have it supposed that he saw nothing, for then he would certainly have been unfit for his post, or very stupid. None of the Emperor's clothes had been so successful as these.

"Why, he has got nothing on!" cried a little child.

"Listen to the voice of innocence!" said the father; for every one was whispering to his neighbour what the child had said. "He has nothing on! There is a little child here who says he has nothing on!"

"He really has nothing on!" at length cried the whole crowd.

The Emperor shrank within himself as he heard, for it seemed to him that they were right, but he thought at the same time, "At any rate I must go through with this procession to the end." So he put on a still haughtier air, and the gentlemen-in-waiting marched behind, carefully holding up the train that wasn't there.

THE UGLY DUCKLING

IT was so pretty out in the country in the glorious summer-time.

The corn stood yellow, the oats green, the hay was stacked in the meadows, and the stork strode about on his long red legs and chattered Egyptian, for he had learnt that language from his mother. Round about the fields and meadows were great forests, and in the midst of the woods deep lakes; yes, it was truly delightful out in the country!

In the sunlight stood an old country house encircled by deep ditches. From the walls right down to the water grew large dock-leaves that had shot up so high that little children could stand on tiptoe beneath the tallest. It was as lonesome there as in the thickest wood, and here lay a duck upon her nest; she was engaged in hatching her young, but by this time she was nearly tired of the task, it had lasted so long and she seldom received visitors; the other ducks preferred to swim about in the ditches to waddling up the bank and sitting under a dock-leaf to gossip with her.

At last one egg cracked, and then another and another.

"Peep! peep!" was the cry; all the yolks of the eggs had become alive and stuck out their heads.

"Quick! quick!" cried the mother duck; and so they all scampered around as fast as they could and looked about beneath the green leaves, and the mother let them look to their hearts' content, for green is good for the eyes.

"How big the world is, to be sure!" said the young ducklings, for now indeed they had more room to stir about in than when they lay within the egg shell.

"Do you fancy that this is the whole world?" said their mother, "why, it stretches far beyond the other side of the garden right into the parson's field; but there I have never been. I suppose the whole lot of you are out, eh?" and she rose up. "No, I haven't got you all yet! The biggest egg lies there still. How much longer am I to wait? I am sick and tired of it!" And down she sat again.

"Well, how are things with you?" asked an old duck who came to pay her a visit.

"This last egg takes such a time!" answered the sitting duck, "no hole will come in it! But

just look at the others! They are the prettiest ducklings I have ever seen! They are all just like their father, the wretch! He never comes to see me!"

"Let me see the egg that won't crack!" said the old duck. "Take my word for it, 'tis a turkey's egg. I was fooled that way myself once, and the youngsters were a grief and a trouble to me, I can tell you, for they were afraid of the water. I couldn't get them into it anyhow! I snapped and quacked, but it was of no use. Let me see the egg, I say! Yes, it is a turkey's egg. Leave it alone and go and teach the other children to swim!"

"Nay, but I'll sit on it a bit longer all the same," said the duck; "I have sat so long already, I may as well sit a few hours longer."

"As you like!" said the old duck, and she waddled off.

At last the big egg cracked. "Peep, peep!" said the fledgling as it wriggled out—he was so big and ugly. The duck looked at him.

"What a frightfully big duckling it is!" cried she; "none of the others is a bit like him! Surely, it can never be a turkey chick! Well, we shall soon find out about that! Into the water he goes if I have to *kick* him in!"

Next day it was the most glorious weather; the sun shone on all the green dock leaves. The mother duck with all her family came down to the ditch. "Quick! quick!" cried she, and one duckling plunged into the water after the other; the water closed over their heads, but up they came again at once and floated so prettily; their legs went of themselves. The whole lot of them were in; even the ugly grey fledgling swam along with them.

"No, it is no turkey!" said the mother duck. "See how nicely it uses its legs, how upright it holds itself! 'Tis my own youngster! Now, really, when you come to look closely, it's quite pretty! Quick! quick! Come with me now and I will lead you into the great world and present you to the duck-yard, but always keep close to me so that no one may tread upon you; and beware of the cat!"

And so they came into the duck-yard. There was a frightful noise there, for two families were fighting over an eel's head, and the cat got it after all.

"Look, that is the way of the world!" said the duck-mother, and licked her beak, for she would have liked the eel's head herself. "Use your legs," said she, "look smart and nod your necks

The whole lot of them were in; even the ugly
fledgling swam along with them.

at that old duck yonder, for she is the most distinguished person here; she is of Spanish descent; and don't you see she has a red rag tied to her leg! That is the greatest distinction any duck can have; it is as much as to say they don't want to get rid of her, and men and beasts are to take note thereof. Quack! quack! Don't turn your feet in! A well brought-up duckling keeps his feet wide apart like father and mother! Look!—So!—And now thrust out your neck and say 'Quack!'"

They did so; but all the other ducks round about looked at them and said quite loudly, "Just look! Now we shall have all that mob too! As if there were not enough of us here already! And oh, fie! what a fright *that* duckling looks! We won't put up with him, anyhow!" And immediately a duck flew at the big fledgling and bit him in the neck.

"Leave him alone, will you!" said the mother; "he's doing no harm."

"Yes, but he is too big and queer!" said the duck who had bitten him, "and so he must be snubbed!"

"You have pretty children, mother!" said the old duck with the rag round her leg. "They are all pretty except one, which hasn't turned out

well at all! I wish you could make him over again!"

"Impossible, your grace!" said the mother of the ducklings; "he is not pretty, but he has a good disposition and swims as nicely as any of the others; I may say even a bit better! I fancy he will grow prettier, or perhaps somewhat smaller, in time. He has lain too long in the egg and therefore he has not got the proper shape!"

Then she trimmed the ruffled feathers of his neck with her beak and smoothed down the rest of his person. "Besides, he is a drake," she said, "and so it doesn't so much matter! I think he'll be strong enough to fight his way along!"

"The other ducklings are very nice," said the old duck. "Pray make yourself quite at home, and if you find an eel's head you may bring it to me."

And so the family made themselves comfortable.

But the poor duckling who had come out of the egg last of all and looked so ugly, was bitten, pushed about, and made fun of both by the ducks and the hens. "He is too big!" they all cried; and the turkey cock, who had been born with spurs, and therefore thought himself an emperor at least, puffed himself out like a ship in full sail,

pitched into him, and then gabbled till he was red in the face. The poor duckling knew not whither to turn, and was so distressed because he was ugly and the laughing-stock of the whole duck-yard.

Thus it fared with him the first day, and after that things grew worse and worse. The wretched duckling was chivied about by them all. His own brothers and sisters kept saying: "If only the cat would take you, you hideous object!" while even his own mother said, "Would that you were far, far away!" The ducks bit him, the hens pecked him, and the girl who gave the animals their food kicked him.

Then he ran away and flew right over the hedge; the little birds in the bushes were scared and flew into the air. "That is because I am so ugly," said the duckling and closed his eyes. So he ran on till he came to a large fen where the wild ducks dwelt, and there he lay the whole night, weary and sorrowful.

In the morning the wild ducks flew up into the air and saw their new comrade. "What kind of a thing are you?" they asked, and the duckling turned in every direction and greeted them as well as it could.

"You are intensely ugly!" said the wild ducks;

"but it is all the same to us if only you do not marry into the family!"

Poor creature! As if he had any idea of marrying! It was enough for him if he might be allowed to lie among the rushes and drink a little fen water.

There he lay for two whole days, and then there came two wild geese, or rather wild ganders; it was not very long ago since they had come out of the egg-shells, and that was why they were so pert.

"Listen, comrade!" said they; "you are so ugly that we have quite taken a fancy to you. Will you scud about with us and become a bird of passage? Close by here, in another fen, are some sweet, delightful wild geese, maiden ladies the whole lot of them, who can say 'Quack!' most charmingly. You'll be able to cut a fine figure there, ugly as you are!"

"Pop! Pop!" sounded the same instant, and the two wild geese fell dead among the rushes, while the water turned blood-red. "Pop! Pop!" sounded again, and whole swarms of wild geese flew up out of the rushes. Then there were fresh bangs. It was a shooting party; the sportsmen lay round about the fen, nay, some even sat up in the branches of the trees which

stretched right over the rushes; the blue smoke went like clouds among the dark trees and hung far over the water, and the hunting dogs came splash-splashing through the mire. Reeds and sedges swayed in every direction; it was a terrible moment for the poor duckling, who turned its head round to put it beneath its wing, and the same instant a frightful big dog stood right in front of it, his tongue hanging far out of his mouth, his eyes shining fearfully; he put his jaws right against the duckling, showed his sharp teeth—and splash! off he went again without seizing it.

"Oh, heaven be praised!" sighed the duckling "I am so ugly that even the dog doesn't like to bite me!"

And it lay quite still while the shots hissed among the sedges and gun after gun cracked and banged away.

Only when the day was far advanced and all was still again did the poor duckling dare to get up. It waited many hours longer before it looked about, and then hastened away from the fen as fast as it could. It ran over marsh and meadow, but there was such a wind that it could hardly get along.

Towards evening it reached a broken-down

little cottage. The poor creature was so wretched that it could not make up its mind as to which side it would fall, and so remained standing. It then perceived that the door was off one of its hinges and hung so loosely that it could peep into the room through the crack.

Here dwelt an old woman with her cat and her hen. The cat, whom she called Sonny, could shoot up his back and purr; he could even throw out sparks, but you had to stroke his fur the wrong way first. The hen had stumpy little legs and was therefore called Chicky-short-legs; it laid good eggs and the old woman loved it as if it had been her child.

Next morning they perceived the strange duckling and the cat began to purr and the hen to cluck.

"Well I never!" said the old woman, and looked all about her. But her eyesight was not very good, so she fancied that the duckling was a fat duck which had lost its way. "Why, this is a rare good find!" said she; "now perhaps I can have ducks' eggs too. We must wait a bit and see."

So the duckling was taken on trial for three weeks, but not a single egg came to light. The cat was master in that house and the hen was

mistress, and they always said: "We and the world!" for they thought that they were half of the world, and the better half too. The duckling hinted that there might be two opinions on this point, but the hen would not hear of such a thing.

"Can you lay eggs?" she asked.

"No."

"Then hold your tongue!"

And the cat said: "Can you arch your back, purr and throw out sparks?"

"No!"

"Then you have no business to have any opinion at all when sensible people are talking."

So the duckling sat in a corner and was quite out of sorts. Then it thought of the fresh air and the sunshine, and was seized with such a strong desire to float upon the water that at last it could not help saying so to the hen.

"Why, what's the matter with you?" asked the hen. "This comes of being idle. You have nothing to do, and that's why you have all these fancies. Lay eggs or purr, and they'll go away!"

"But it is so nice to float upon the water!" said the duckling; "so nice to take a header and go right down to the bottom!"

"Oh, most delightful, I am sure!" said the hen. "You're mad, I think! Ask the cat; he's

the wisest person I know. If he likes floating on the water or taking headers, I'll say no more. Ask our mistress, the old woman; there is no one in the whole world wiser than she. Do you fancy that *she* has any desire to float on the water and take headers?"

"You don't understand me!" said the duckling.

"If *we* don't understand you, I should like to know who does! You will never be wiser than the cat and the old woman, let alone myself! Don't make a fool of yourself, child, and thank Heaven for all the kindness that has been shown to you. Have you not been admitted into a warm room and into company from which you can learn something? But you're a wretch and intercourse with you is anything but pleasant. You may take my word for it. I only mean it for your good when I tell you unpleasant truths. 'Tis only one's real friends who talk to one like that! See that you lay eggs and learn to purr or give out sparks."

"I think I will go out into the wide world," said the duckling.

"Do by all means!" said the hen.

So the duckling went. It floated upon the water, and took headers, but all the other animals looked down upon it because it was so ugly.

The children wanted to play with it, but the duckling fancied they meant to hurt it, and in its fright flew right into the milk-can, so that the milk was splashed all about the room.

And now autumn came. The leaves of the forest grew yellow and brown, the wind caught hold of them and made them dance about, and there was a cold look high in the sky. The clouds hung heavy with hail and snowflakes, and on the fence stood the raven and cried, for sheer cold, "Ow! ow!" Yes, the very thought was enough to make one freeze. The poor duckling had anything but a nice time of it.

One evening the sun went down gloriously, and forth from a large grove came a whole flock of lovely large birds. The duckling had never seen anything so beautiful; they were dazzlingly white with long, supple, graceful necks: they were swans. They uttered a strange cry, spread out their splendid wings, and flew away from the cold fields to warmer lands and open lakes. They rose so high, so high, that the ugly little duckling felt quite queer. It turned round in the water like a wheel, stretched its neck after them high in the air, and uttered such a loud and odd shriek that it was frightened at its own voice. Oh! it could not forget the beautiful birds, the happy birds, and as soon as it had lost sight of them altogether, it ducked right down to the bottom, and when it came up again it was quite beside itself. It knew not the name of the birds, or

whither they were flying, yet it loved them as it had never loved anything before. It envied them not one bit. How could it presume to wish for such loveliness! It would have been only too glad if they had suffered it to go with them, the poor ugly creature.

And the winter grew so cold, so cold, the duckling had to keep swimming on the water to prevent it from freezing altogether. But every night the hole in which it swam became smaller and smaller; it froze so that the whole crust of ice crackled again and the duckling had to use its legs continually so that the water might not close up. At last the poor duckling grew faint, lay quite still, and froze fast into the ice.

Early in the morning a farmer came that way, saw the duckling, went out to it, broke the ice with his wooden shoe, and brought the bird home to his wife, and there it revived.

The children wanted to play with it, but the duckling fancied they meant to hurt it, and in its fright flew right into the milk-can, so that the milk was splashed all about the room. The woman shrieked and smote her hands; then it flew into the butter tub, and then down into the meal barrel and out again, by which time it cut a pretty figure, you may be sure. The woman

Some little children came running into the garden; they threw corn and breadcrumbs on the water, and the smaller of them exclaimed, "There's a new one!"

shrieked and flung the fire-irons at it; the children tumbled over each other's legs in trying to seize it, and laughed and shrieked again. Luckily the door was open, and out it rushed into the freshly fallen snow among the bushes, and there lay as if in a swoon.

But it would really be too heartrending to tell of all the distress and wretchedness the poor duckling had to put up with that hard winter. It was lying in the marsh among the rushes when the sun again began to shine warmly; the larks were singing, it was beautiful spring time.

One day it extended its wings; they had a stronger beat than before and bore it easily away; and ere it rightly knew where it was, the duckling found itself in a large garden where apple trees stood in full bloom, where the lilac flowers gave forth their perfume and hung on the long green branches right down towards the winding ditches. Oh, it was lovely here, so full of the freshness of spring; and right in front, from out of the thicket, came three beautiful white swans; they made a rushing sound with their wings and floated upon the water. The duckling recognized the splendid creatures and was overcome by a strange feeling of sorrow.

"I will fly towards the royal birds! They

will peck me to death because I, who am so ugly, dare to approach them; but it is all one to me. Better to be slain by them than to be nipped by the ducks, pecked by the hens, kicked by the girl who looks after the poultry, and to suffer want in the winter-time!"

So it flew out into the water, and swam towards the stately swans, who saw it and came darting towards it with bristling plumes. "Kill me and have done with me!" cried the poor creature, and bowed its head towards the water and awaited death. But what did it see in the clear water? Its own image! It was no longer a clumsy, dark grey bird, ugly and clammy, but was itself a swan!

It doesn't matter a bit about being born in a duck-yard when one has lain in a swan's egg.

The large swans now swam round and round about it and stroked it with their beaks and were quite friendly.

Some little children came running into the garden; they threw corn and breadcrumbs on the water, and the smallest of them exclaimed: "There's a new one!" The other children also shouted, "Yes! a new one has come!" And they clapped their hands and danced about and ran to fetch their father and mother, and bread

and cakes were flung into the water, and they all said: "The new one is the prettiest! It is so young and lovely!" And the old swans bowed before it.

It felt so bashful that it stuck its head beneath its wings, it did not know what to do. It was almost too happy but not a bit proud, for a good heart is never proud. It thought of how it had been persecuted and despised, and now all said that it was the loveliest of lovely birds. And the lilacs bowed their branches down into the water towards it, and the sun shone so nice and warm, and then the swan swelled out its plumage, raised its slim neck, and cried from the bottom of its heart: "I never dreamed of such bliss when I was an ugly duckling!"

THE FLYING TRUNK

THERE was once a merchant who was so rich that he could have paved the whole street, and a little alley besides, with silver pieces, but he didn't, for he had other things to do with his money. He made a shilling out of every farthing he invested (that's the sort of merchant *he* was!), and then he died.

His son now got all this money and he lived right merrily, went to fancy balls every night, made kites out of bonds and banknotes, and played at ducks and drakes over the water with gold pieces instead of stones, so that his money had leave to go, and go it did, till at last he had nothing in the world but four farthings, a pair of slippers, and an old dressing-gown. Now that he was not fit to be seen in the street with them, his friends washed their hands of him altogether; but one of them, who was better natured, sent him an old trunk, with the message "Pack up!" which was certainly very good advice, but as he had nothing at all to pack up he sat on the trunk instead.

It was a very wonderful trunk. You had only

to press the lock and the trunk set off flying. It did so now. Whisk! up the chimney it flew with him, high above the clouds, farther and farther and farther still; it creaked frightfully and the young man was terrified lest it should go to pieces altogether, in which case he would have turned quite a pretty somersault. But at last he got to the land of the Turks. He hid the trunk in a wood beneath some dried leaves and then went into the town; there was nothing to prevent him from doing that, for among the Turks everybody went about like himself, in dressing-gowns and slippers.

He happened to meet a nurse with a little child. "Listen, thou Turkish nurse!" said he, "what is that large castle close to the town with the windows all so high?"

"That is where the King's daughter dwells!" said she; "it has been foretold that she will have great trouble about a lover, and so no wooer is allowed to approach her unless the King and Queen come too."

"Thank you!" said the merchant's son; and he went back to the wood, sat on the trunk, flew on to the roof of the castle, and crept through the Princess's window.

She lay upon a sofa asleep, and was so pretty

that the merchant's son could not help kissing her. She awoke and was quite frightened, but he said he was the god of the Turks who had come through the air to her, and that seemed to please her. So they sat side by side and he told her tales about her eyes; he said they were like beautiful dark lakes and that thoughts swam in them like so many little mermaids; and he made up tales about her forehead, which he said was like a snow mountain with the loveliest rooms and pictures; and he told her about the stork that brings the sweet little children. Yes, indeed, very pretty tales they were, so he wooed the Princess and she said "Yes," immediately.

"But," she added, "you must come on Saturday when the King and Queen are here to tea; they will be very proud for me to have a Turkish god for my husband. But see that you have a really lovely tale ready, for that is what my parents are particularly fond of; my mother likes *her* stories moral and refined, while my father likes them rollicking—things that make one laugh, you know!"

"Very well, the only bridal gift I shall bring will be a nice tale!" said he, and so they parted. But the Princess gave him a sabre set with gold

pieces: it was just what he wanted and he could turn it to good account.

So he flew away, bought himself a new dressing-gown, and then sat down in the wood and began composing a tale; it was to be ready by Saturday, and it is not so easy to compose that sort of thing to order.

But he was ready with it at last, and by that time it was Saturday. The King and Queen and the whole court were having tea with the Princess, and they were all awaiting him. He was received so nicely!

"And now will you tell us a tale?" said the Queen, "one that is profound and improving!"

"But which will make one laugh as well!" said the King.

"Oh, certainly!" said he; and so he told them what you must now listen to very attentively.

"There was once a bundle of matches which were very proud of their descent; their ancestral tree—that is to say, the great fir-tree of which each one of them was a little splinter—had been a huge old tree in the forest. The matches now lay upon the shelf between a tinder-box and an old iron pot, and to these they told the tale of their youth.

"'Yes, when we were on the green branch,' said they, 'then we were indeed happy! Every morning and evening diamond tea, that is to say, dew. Sunshine all day in summer, and all the little birds to tell us stories. We could see very well that we, too, were rich, for the leaf trees[1] were only dressed up in summer, but our family had the right to wear clothes both summer and winter. But then came the wood-cutters; that was the great revolution, and our family was felled to the ground. The head of the family got a place as main-mast on board a splendid ship, which could sail round the world if it liked; the other branches went elsewhere, and our mission now is to light candles for the common people — that is why we distinguished people have come down to the kitchen.'

"'Well, things are very different with me!' said the iron pot, by the side of which lay the matches, 'ever since I came out in the world I have been scoured and boiled many and many a time. I look to solidity, and, properly speaking, am the first person in the house. My only joy is to lie neat and clean after dinner on the shelf and to have a sensible chat with my comrades; but if I except the pail, which occasionally goes down

[1] All trees except the pine and fir species.

into the garden, we always live indoors. Our only newsmonger is the market-basket, and it is always talking about the Government and the people. Last year there was an old pot with us who was so terrified by this talk that it fell down and dashed itself to pieces. That market-basket is quite a Radical, I can tell you!'

"'You chatter too much, you do!' said the tinder-box, and the steel struck the flint till it sparkled. 'Shall we have a cheerful afternoon now?'

"'Yes, let us talk about who is the most nobly born,' said the matches.

"'No, I don't like talking about myself,' said the pot. 'Let us have an entertainment. I'll begin. I'll tell about something which every one has experienced; one can imagine one's self in similar circumstances, and that is such capital fun. "By the Baltic Sea, where the Danish beeches grow——"'

"'That is a nice beginning,' said the plates, 'we know we shall like that story.'

"'Yes, there I passed the days of my youth in a quiet family; the furniture was waxed, the floor washed, and we had clean curtains every fortnight.'

"'How interesting you make your story!'

said the hearth-broom. 'One can hear at once that it is a lady who tells the tale; a vein of such refinement runs through it all.'

"'Yes, one does feel that!' said the pail, and it took a little skip for pure joy, so that the floor creaked.

"So the pot continued its story, and the end was as good as the beginning.

"The plates rattled for joy, and the hearth-brush took some green parsley and crowned the pot, for it knew that that would vex the others. 'And if I crown her to-day,' it thought, 'she will crown me to-morrow.'

"'Now I will dance,' said the fire-tongs, and dance it did. How it flung its legs into the air! the old chair-cover in the corner split its sides at the sight.

"'Let me be crowned too!' said the fire-tongs, and crowned she was.

"'A low lot, a low lot after all!' thought the matches.

"And now the teapot was asked to sing, but she protested that she had a cold and could only sing when she was boiling over, but this was pure pretence; she would not sing unless she was on the table with the family.

"Right in the window-sill stood an old quill

pen which the maid-servant used to write with; there was nothing remarkable about it except that it had been dipped a little too deeply into the inkpot, but of that it was proud. 'If the teapot won't sing,' it said, 'she may leave it alone. Outside there is a nightingale hanging in a cage; it can sing if you like. It is true it hasn't *learnt* anything, but we won't speak ill of it this evening.'

"'I consider it very unbecoming that such a foreign bird should be listened to at all,' said the tea-kettle, who was the kitchen songstress and half-sister of the teapot. 'Is it patriotic? That's what I want to know! Let the market-basket decide.'

"'All I know is that I am very angry!' said the market-basket; 'nobody can imagine how angry I am! Is this a proper way of passing the evening, I ask? Would it not be much better to put the house to rights first? Every one would then get his proper place, and I should rule the whole roost. Things would be very different then!'

"'Yes, let us kick up a row!' said they all. The same instant the door opened. It was the maid-servant, and they immediately stood stock-still; no one uttered a sound. But there was

not a pot there which did not know very well what it could do and how distinguished it re. was. 'Yes, if only I had liked,' thought e. one of them, 'what a jolly afternoon we shou. have had!'

"The maid-servant took the matches and struck a light with them: how they splutterec and burst into flame, to be sure! 'Now every one can see,' thought they, 'that we stand first of all! What light, what splendour is ours!' and so they burned right out."

"That was a beautiful story!" said the Queen. "I so entered into the feelings of the matches in the kitchen. Yes, now you shall have our daughter."

"Yes, certainly," said the King, "you shall have our daughter on Monday!" And they spoke to him in such a friendly way that he felt he was already one of the family.

So the wedding-day was fixed. The evening before the whole city was illuminated; buns and cakes were scattered broadcast, and the street-boys stood on their heads, whistled through their fingers, and cried "Hurrah!" It was truly magnificent.

"Yes; I must take good care to do something

lil wise!" thought the merchant's son. So he bought rockets, crackers, and every sort of firework you can think of, put them in his trunk and then flew up into the air. How they went off and how they fizzed! The Turks all skipped into the air at the sight, so that their slippers flew about their ears; such a shower of meteors they had never seen before. Now they could well understand that it was the god of the Turks himself who was to marry the Princess.

As soon as the merchant's son came down again into the wood with his trunk he thought: "I will just go into the town to learn how the affair went off!" And it was only natural that he should wish to do so.

Every one whom he asked about it had seen the affair in his own way, but one and all thought it charming.

"I saw the god of the Turks himself," said one; "he had eyes like shining stars and a beard like foaming water."

"He flew in a fiery mantle," said another, "the loveliest little angels peeped forth from the folds of it."

Yes, he heard the most beautiful things about himself, and the day after he was to be married.

And now he went back to the wood to sit on

his trunk—but where was it? The trunk was burnt! A spark from the fireworks had remained within, the trunk had caught fire, and was now nothing but ashes. He could fly no more, nor go to meet his bride.

She stood all day on the roof and waited; and most likely she is still waiting; but he goes round about the world and tells stories, but they are no longer as merry as the story he told about the matches.

THUMBELISA

THERE was once a woman who wanted very much to have a wee little child, but had no idea whatever where she should find one. So she went to an old witch and said to her—

"I do so long to have a little child; will you tell me where I can get one?"

"We'll soon get over that difficulty!" said the witch. "Here is a barley-corn; it is not at all the sort which grows in the farmer's fields, or that fowls are given to eat. Put it in a flower-pot and you'll see something, I promise you."

"Thank you," said the woman, and she gave the witch twelve silver pennies, went home, and planted the barley-corn. Immediately a beautiful flower grew up which looked just like a tulip, but the leaves were all folded tightly together as if it were still budding.

"That's a pretty flower!" said the woman; and she kissed the lovely red and yellow petals. At that very moment the flower gave a loud crack and opened. It was a real tulip, anyone could see that, but right in the middle of

the flower sat a wee little girl, so nice and fine. She was only a thumb long, so they called her Thumbelisa.

She was given a splendidly polished walnut-shell for her cradle, she lay upon blue violet-leaves, and had a roseleaf for her counterpane. There she slept at night, but in the day-time she played on the table, where the woman put a plate surrounded with a wreath of flowers with their stalks in the water; here a large tulip leaf floated, and on this leaf Thumbelisa used to sail from one end of the plate to the other; she had two white horse-hairs to row with. It was such a pretty sight! She could sing too, nicely and softly; never had the like been heard before.

One night, as she lay in her pretty cradle, an ugly old toad came hopping through a broken pane in the window. The toad was big and wet, and it hopped right on to the table where Thumbelisa lay sleeping beneath the red rose-leaf.

"She would make a very nice wife for my son," said the toad; and with that she took up the walnut-shell in which Thumbelisa lay and hopped away through the broken pane out into the garden. A large broad river ran there, but close by the bank it was all swampy and muddy.